

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002841/25
to the Commission
Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR)
(11 July 2025)**

Subject: Encouraging underage tourists to consume alcohol

There are several holiday destinations in southern Europe (e.g. Ibiza, Mallorca, Albufeira, Sunny Beach, Chersonissos, Kos, Split) known for their drinking culture and poor control of whether drinkers are of legal age. This is potentially causing a race to the bottom, with minors opting for holiday destinations which pay scant regard to laws governing minimum drinking age. Minors are encouraged to participate in these trips ⁽¹⁾. Such tourism is also a nuisance to local residents.

1. Does the Commission share the WHO's view that Europe needs to rethink the place of alcohol in society ⁽²⁾, and take the approach that regulation and supervision of this form of cross-border tourism should be a top priority in this context?
2. Does the Commission share the view that holidays in which excessive underage drinking is encouraged, for example through contractual arrangements between international tour operators and stakeholders in the local hospitality industry, are difficult to reconcile with the EU alcohol strategy ⁽³⁾ and the Commission's commitment to sustainable tourism, especially the social aspect thereof ⁽⁴⁾?
3. Will the Commission engage with national governments and travel industry representatives to tackle this issue?

Submitted: 11.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(24 September 2025)**

Alcohol is an established risk factor for non-communicable diseases including cancer. While Member States are mainly responsible for national alcohol policies, the Commission supports them in addressing alcohol-related harm through the strategic framework of the 'Healthier Together' EU non-communicable diseases (NCDs) ⁽¹⁾ initiative and the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan ⁽²⁾.

Under these initiatives, the Member States received funding of EUR 76 million ⁽³⁾ via the EU4Health Programme ⁽⁴⁾, to support them in addressing health determinants and risk factors for NCDs, including harmful alcohol consumption. Another EU-funded project led by the World Health Organisation ⁽⁵⁾ supports the implementation of alcohol policies in Member States.

In line with the political guidelines of the President of the Commission ⁽⁶⁾, the Commission is stepping up its work on preventive health, in particular on cardiovascular diseases.

The Commission is about to finish its consultations to launch an EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy in 2026 ⁽⁷⁾, with Member States and Parliament also having the chance to share their views on the topic.

The Commission supports the voices in the tourism industry who claim that a sustainable and resilient tourism sector should be based in a supply of increasing quality. Funding for such type of projects is available under various EU instruments.

¹ <https://www.golloretdemar.nl/lloret-de-mar-uitgaan-leeftijd/> en <https://www.vakantiesvoorjongeren.nl/zonvakanties/spanje/mallorca-el-arenal/uitgaan-el-arenal/>

² <https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/02-10-2024-redefine-alcohol--who-s-urgent-call-for-europe-to-rethink-alcohol-s-place-in-society> en <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/m/item/alcohol--health-and-policy-response-in-the-european-union-in-2019>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/alcohol/documents/alcohol_com_625_en.pdf

⁴ https://transition-pathways.europa.eu/system/files/2024-09/Transition_Pathway_For_TourismFEB2022_correctedlink.pdf

⁽¹⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/healthier-together-eu-non-communicable-diseases-initiative_en.

⁽²⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-of-life/european-health-union/cancer-plan-europe_en.

⁽³⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/cancer/europes-beating-cancer-plan-eu4health-financed-projects/projects/ja-preventnacd_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/funding/eu4health-programme-2021-2027-vision-healthier-european-union_en.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2023-8230-48002-71090>.

⁽⁶⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en?filename=Political%20Guidelines%202024-2029_EN.pdf.

⁽⁷⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/TourismStrategy>.